

## Junkanoo Masks – Bahamas



### Pictures of Junkanoo Masks



### What are Junkanoo Masks?

Junkanoo masks are made in the Bahamas as a celebration of Junkanoo, a Bahamian national festival celebrated mostly on Boxing Day and New Year's Morning. The origin of Junkanoo is unknown but it is thought to originate in West Africa. Legend tells that the name came from John Canoe, a tribal chief who demanded the right to celebrate even after being brought to the West Indies in slavery.<sup>1</sup>

### Required Materials

- Paper plates (12).
- Elastic cord (24).
- Coloured paints (various colours).
- Collage materials (feathers, pom poms, pipe cleaners etc).
- Scissors (12).
- Glue sticks (12).

### Preparation and how to do it

Before the session, look up some examples of junkanoo masks placed in their festival context. Depending on the needs of the group, pre-cut paper plates with holes for the eyes and pre-cut the elastic cord to the correct lengths.

Start with an introduction to junkanoo and junkanoo masks, showing examples of what they look like and their use.

Start by cutting the eye holes in the paper plates. The easiest way to do this is to fold the mask near the centre of each eye hole and then cut out a semi-circle of the folded plate.

Decorate the masks using coloured paints.

Using glue, attach the collage materials and the elastic cord. One cord can go all the way round the head or two can hook over each ear.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Government of the Bahamas - <https://tinyurl.com/2sm8c7md>